



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MATERIALS TRANSPORTATION BUREAU
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

28216

[49 CFR Part 173]

[Docket No. HM-162; Notice No. 78-9]

**SHIPPERS—GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR
SHIPMENTS AND PACKAGINGS**

Metric Equivalence for Quantity Limitations

AGENCY: Materials Transportation Bureau, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The amendment proposed herein would authorize, for quantity limitations that are now specified by U.S. liquid measure or avoirdupois weight in the Department's Hazardous Materials Regulations, the use of metric measures substituted on the basis of 1 liter per quart and 500 grams per pound. The authorization would extend to quantities of 110 gallons or less and 1,000 pounds or less. This proposed rule is issued as the result of petitions that recommended revision of the Department's Hazardous Materials Regulations to facilitate conversion to metric measurements in transportation of hazardous materials.

DATE: Comments must be received on or before August 18, 1978.

ADDRESS: Send comments to Dockets Branch, Information Services Division, Office of Program Support, 2100 Second Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20590. It is requested that five copies be submitted.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CONTACT:**

Alan I. Roberts, Associate Director for Hazardous Materials Regulation, Materials Transportation, Research and Special Programs Administration, 2100 Second Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20590, 202-426-0656.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: By petition dated February 7, 1977, the Manufacturing Chemists Association (MCA) recommended revision of section 173.26(a) of the Department's

Hazardous Materials Regulations to facilitate conversion to metric measurements in the transportation of hazardous materials. The MCA stated that this change would permit the conversion of any hazardous materials package to metric measurements and that such a change would provide shippers and packaging manufacturers with the necessary latitude to convert to more practicable capacities measured in metric units, such as are now provided for by the regulations of the International Air Transport Association and the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization. The MCA petition is similar to an earlier petition of the International Air Transport Association containing the rationale that the 10-percent increase in the net quantity per package (dry measure) for import and export shipments would have a negligible effect on safety, since the packaging requirements otherwise would be the same.

With the exception of an exclusion pertaining to packagings having large volumes, the Bureau agrees with the petitioners and believes that adoption of the changes proposed herein (1) will have no adverse effect on the safe transportation of hazardous materials; (2) will be of considerable assistance to shippers converting to systems of metric measurement for both domestic and international purposes; and (3) will not impose any additional costs on packaging manufacturers or shippers since use of the provisions of § 173.26 is optional.

The second sentence in the proposed change states "Specification packagings must be marked to indicate the use of metric measurements and must be tested accordingly." An illustration of compliance with this proposed requirement for a DOT-17E drum would be,

"DOT-17E STC ABC 18-220L-78"

and a corresponding change in the quantity of water used in the drop test

based on a rated capacity of 220 liters.

The primary drafter of this document is Alan I. Roberts, Associate Director for Hazardous Materials Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau, Research and Special Programs Administration.

In consideration of the foregoing, § 173.26 paragraph (a) of Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, would be revised to read as follows:

§ 173.26 Quantity limitations.

(a) When quantity limitations are specified in this subchapter by U.S. liquid measure for 110 gallons or less, or by avoirdupois weight for 1,000 pounds or less, quantities measured in metric units may be substituted on the basis of 1 liter per quart and 500 grams per pound. Specification packagings must be marked to indicate the use of metric measurements and must be tested accordingly. Abbreviations for metric markings are L for liter, ml for milliliter, kg for kilogram, and g for gram.

(16 U.S.C. 1803, 1804, 1808; 49 CFR 1.53(c) and paragraph (n)(4) of appendix A to part 102.)

NOTE.—The Materials Transportation Bureau has determined that this document does not contain a major proposal requiring preparation of an economic impact statement under Executive Order 11949, and OMB Circular A-107 nor an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act (49 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

Issued in Washington, D.C., on June 26, 1978.

ALAN I. ROBERTS,
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Materials Regulation, Materials
Transportation Bureau.

[FR Doc. 78-18235 Filed 6-28-78; 8:45 am]